Suit Filed Against FBI For Harassment

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Accusing the FBI of trying to isolate and silence critics of the government, the American Friends Service Committee, another peace group and 18 individuals filed suit in U.S. District Court on Wednesday seeking an injunction against alleged harassment.

The suit named Atty. Gen. John N. Mitchell, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Special Agent Joe D. Jamison, head of the FBI in Philadelphia as defendants in their official capacities and individually.

The 18-page complaint charged the FBI with some 30 specific acts "taken for the sole purpose of intimidating and harassing the plaintiffs ... and deterring and chilling plaintiffs from engaging in constitutionally protected activity of free speech, association, assembly, press, movement and petition."

The FBI in Philadelphia had no comment.

Three of the persons bringing the suit, Jim Hart, Anne Flitcraft and Francis Femia, read a statement on behalf of the Philadelphia Resistance saying:

"FBI agents are attempting to create around us an atmosphere of fear so that others will be afraid to speak or work with us or to oppose publically the policies of our government as we have been actively doing."

The AFSC is a Quaker-founded group set up for social, religious and philanthropic work in the United States and foreign countries. The Philadelphia Resistance is an antiwar, antidraft organization. Of the 18 persons bringing the suit, 13 are employes of the AFSC or the Resistance.

The complaint said the alleged harassment began April 1 under the pretense of investigating the March theft of documents from an FBI office in Media, Pa.